

Michael O. Leavitt Governor Kathleen Clarke Executive Director Lowell P. Braxton Division Director State of Utah
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210 PO Box 145801 Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5801 801-538-5340 801-359-3940 (Fax) 801-538-7223 (TDD)

September 7, 1999

TO:

Minerals File

FROM:

D. Wayne Hedberg, Permit Supervisor and Doug Jensen, Reclamation Specialist

RE:

Site Inspection, North Lily Mining Company, Tintic Heap Leach Project, M/023/007,

Juab County, Utah

Date of Inspection:

August 18, 1999

Time of Inspection:

4:15 - 4:45pm

Conditions:

Sunny, clear and warm

Participants:

Wayne Hedberg, and Doug Jensen, DOGM

Purpose of Inspection: To evaluate onsite conditions of this suspended heap leaching operation.

A brief, unscheduled inspection was performed by Division staff to observe the status of onsite conditions at this suspended heap leaching operation. No project personnel were on the property during our inspection. The gate leading to the heap leach pad area and the processing ponds was wide open, giving direct unrestricted access to the site. Drain down solutions from the pregnant and barren ponds were being pumped back up onto the north end of the heap via a 4-inch line. A number of sprinklers were spraying the recycled solution into the air above the heap to enhance evaporation of the residual pond solutions. One or two sprinkler heads were apparently broken as solution was shooting straight up like a fountain from one or two locations. It appeared that the drain down solution was coming off the heaps nearly as fast as it was being recycled back up onto the heap. The pregnant pond was at least 3/4 full and the barren pond was estimated to be ½ full of solution. The solution in the ponds was the color of strong tea. The makeup water pond was 1/4 or less full.

Heavy salt encrustation has occurred on the surface of the heap near the discharge area of the sprinkler lines. A strong sulphur smell was noted around this sprinkler discharge area as well. A number of areas were noted where runoff from the sprinkler distribution system has eroded rills and gullies into the heap. Photos were taken of the heavily eroded areas. A few wash outs were also observed on the heap where crushed ore has washed downslope into the exterior solution conveyance channels. The solution channels are nearly full (to overflowing) of eroded heap material in many locations. A heavy precipitation event would likely cause a breach of these channels allowing uncontrolled discharge into adjacent undisturbed areas.

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Cracks and tears were noted in the pond and solution channel primary liners in many areas. It was not evident if the secondary liners were also damaged or deteriorating. A recent range fire has burned the native vegetation right up to the edge of the security fence at the south end of the heap. We checked the security of the doors in the office trailer and the processing facilities building. All doors were appropriately locked. We were unsure how often the site was being visited by the caretaker assigned to watch over and maintain this site. We had some concern over the possibility that the pump(s) could be left running for long periods of time with no one onsite to watch for and correct problems that might develop.

A number of photos were taken to document the current conditions of the site.

jb cc:

Gene Webb, North Lily Mining Co. Dennis Frederick, DWQ

Mary Ann Wright, DOGM

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